

Sends Special Message to Congress Giving Results of His Observations in Canal Zone-- Replies to Critics and Makes Recommendations.

The sanitation work in the cities of Panama and Colon has been just as important as in the zone itself, and in many respects much more difficult, because of the necessity to deal with the already existing population, which naturally had much sympathy with revolutionary changes. The value of which they were for a long time unable to perceive. The laboring population consisted largely of colored laborers coming, having come over from the West Indies to work on the canal. Abandon the work and either take to the brush or the idleness of Colon, or, thus poisoning Colon with the least degree of malaria, the inferior laborers

Colon Pavements.

I rode through the streets of Colon, seeing them at the height of the rainy season, after two days of almost unexampled down-pour, when they were in the worst condition. The streets, as a whole they were undoubtedly very bad as bad as Pennsylvania avenue in Washington before Grant's administration. Nevertheless, they were thoroughly satisfactory ships, however. Some of the side streets are also in good condition. In others the drainage is so good that the riding is easy. Through three-fourths of the town it is now possible to walk, even during the period of tremendous rain, without getting wet, and the riding is easy, owing to the rapidity with which the surface water is carried away in the ditches. In the remaining one-fourth of the town the riding is very deep—about as deep as in the ordinary street of a low-lying prairie river town of the same size in the United States. The only complaint was that to whom I spoke were a unit in saying that the conditions of the Colon streets were 100 per cent better than at San Juan. The fact that the commission to the town shows the progress that has been made and is being made in macadamizing the streets, complaining made no complaint, and the only complaint was as to the character of some of the material used for repairing certain streets. In investigation of the material used, it was found that it also appeared that the use of the material in question had been abandoned, the commission after having tried it in two streets, found it not appropriate.

The result of the investigation of

Unjust Criticism.—Care and forethought have been expended in the writing of this, and nothing but the reflection of the fact that there is more than truth reflected either to me about the fact or to be deterred by the fact of criticism from doing ahead fast enough. It is curious to note the fact that many of the most severe critics of the commission, criticize them for precisely opposite reasons, some complaining bitterly that the

At Pedro Miguel, Colubra Cut, President Roosevelt was photographed seated on one of the immense steam shovels used in the work of excavating.

I rode through the streets of Colon, seeing them at the height of the rainy season, after a heavy rain almost upon them, and saw how much worse they were at their very worst. Taken as a whole they were undoubtedly very good as compared to the streets of Washington before Grant's administration. Front street is already in thoroughly satisfactory shape, now, and the main street, side streets and alleys also in good condition. In others the change in the streets is rapidly going on. Through three-fourths of the city the sidewalks are in good shape, and during the period of tremendous rain, in low shoes without wetting one's feet, owing to the rapidity with which the surface water is carried away in the ditches. In the remaining one-fourth of the streets the mud is very deep—about the depth of the mud in a low-lying prairie river town of the same size in the United States during early spring. All men to whom I spoke, however, were of the opinion that the conditions of the Colon streets were 100 per cent better than a year ago. The most superficial and hasty inspection of the streets shows that progress has been made and is being made in macadamizing the streets. Complaint was made to me that in the use of some of the material used for repairing certain streets, in investigation the complaint proved to be true, and that the use of the material in question had been abandoned, the commission after having tried it in one or two streets finding it not appropriate.

The result of the investigation of



A black and white photograph showing President Roosevelt and several men in hats and suits standing on a dirt path or excavation site. They are surrounded by a large, steep, earthen bank. The photo is framed by a decorative border.

Photograph of the President and Mrs. Roosevelt and party leaving the Tivoli hotel at Colon taken during the recent inspection of the canal by the chief executive.

work is not in a more advanced condition, while the others complain that it has been made too hasty and that there has been insufficient preparation for the hygiene and comfort of the employees. As a matter of fact neither criticism nor praise would have been of much use quicker than the commission has gone, for such quickness would have meant insufficient preparation. In the case of the others, the delay is not due until every possible future contingency had been met, while there have raised wholly unwarmed defects. The right course to follow is to wait until the right course has been followed. Every reasonable preparation was made in advance, the hygienic conditions in especially being made in the most perfect manner. On the other hand there has been no timid refusal to push forward the work because of the possibility of anticipated future emergencies. For, of course, any defects can only be shown by the working of the system in actual practice.

In addition to attending to the health of the employees, it is, of course, necessary to provide for policing the zone. This is done by a police force which at present numbers about 20 men, under the command of a sergeant. The police men are white and the others black. In different places I questioned some 20 or 25 of these men, taking them at random, and they all seemed to be well trained and in discipline. With one exception all the white men I questioned had served in the American army, usually in the

Philippines, and belonged to the best type of American soldier. Without exception the black policemen whom I mentioned had served either in the British army or in the Jamaican or Barbados police. They were excellent men, and were doing their work well. Where possible the policemen are used to control people of their own color, but in any emergency no hesitation is felt in using force against any race.

Inasmuch as so many both of the white and colored employes have brought their families with them, schools have been started in the schools which I mentioned. Mr. T. Conner, for the white pupils and white American teachers are employed for the colored pupils there are also some white American teachers, and one Spanish teacher. The majority of the normal school teachers, most of them being colored teachers from Jamaica, Barbados and St. Lucia. The schoolrooms were good, and it was a pleasant thing to find the principal that the teachers were taking in their work and

Next in importance to the problem of automation, and indeed now of equal importance, is the problem of securing and training the employees who actually do the work on the canal and the railroad. This great task has been under the control of Mr. [redacted] and his staff, and it has been well done. At present there are some 3,000 white employees and some 1,000 colored employees in the influence of the different kinds of employees were working. I think I saw representatives of every type both at their work and in the training school. I saw and undoubtedly a couple of hundred of them all told, choosing them at random from every class and including every type of complaint. I saw certain grievances almost invariably expressed far greater content and satisfaction with the company than those who called for a complaint.

Nearly 500,000 of the waste employees had come from the United States. No man could be expected to do his work as energetically during their duty without a thrill of pride in them as Americans. They reported that the Chinese were not so energetic as to agitate the wages and that they would not even fight for them. They would not even fight, but as a matter of fact, the only genuine complaint which was made was that the Chinese had the complaints made to me upon the pretense was that owing to the peculiar circumstances of the war, the wages were distant from home, the wages were really not so low as they should be. In fact, the Chinese men were paid more than the American men. I was told that they wanted to be receiving more money a week. However, when the average man who is at home in the United States probably has a family, he has a family to support. I spent figures of the wages paid, so that the Congress can see that the Chinese are not getting a better offer on the subject with certain representative labor men from the United States. The comparative wages paid on the job and at home, and I may then calculate the difference, the actual amount of the figure. 301283

Chinese and Other Labor.

Of the 15,000 or 20,000 day laborers employed on the canal a few hundred are Spaniards. These do excellent work. Their foreman told me that they did twice as well as the West

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The main work is now being done in the Cuabera cut. It was striking and inspiring to see the huge steam shovels at full play, and the dumps of earth and rock to the east and south of the work. The implements of French excavating were everywhere, and the work was far away from the line of work, though of excellent construction, look like the veriest toys when compared with the immense machinery which does the work of dumping cars, much like toy cars when compared with the long trains of huge cars, and the work of the French is far in advance. This represents the enormous advance that has been made in machinery during the past quarter of a century. No doubt, however, that the French have this new machinery, of which we are now so proud, will similarly seem out of date in a few years, and their purpose well nigh. The old French cars had to be entirely discarded. We still have some of the old cars, but they are not so modern cars, which hold but 12 yards of earth. They can be employed on certain lines with sharp curves, but recent cars hold 25 to 30 yards apiece, and instead of the old clumsy methods of unloading them, they can be lowered and raised by means of the whole vestibuled train, thus immensely economizing labor. In the rainy season the work is slow, and the ground is little in dirt, but they work steadily in rock and in the harder ground. There is no doubt that the work during the time was on the whole, and that the expenditure of power and efficiency were most impressive.

An example of the type of canal was decided this week began in good earnest. Then there will be an immense increase in the amount taken out, but even during the last three months, in the rainy season, the output of the canal was 2,000 cubic yards in August, 22,000 cubic yards in September, 23,000 cubic yards, and in October 24,000 cubic yards. In October new canals were established for the output of individual shovels as well as for the tonnage haul of individual locomotives. The spirit of emulation and healthy spirit of emulation between the different shovel and locomotive crews, has almost in a spirit as has grown on our part of the canal. The spirit of emulation in matters of marksmanship. Passing through the cut the glass in the place the entire side of the hill has been taken out recently by 27 tons of dynamite, which were exploded at one place. The explosion of dynamite, a presidential salute of 21 charges of dynamite, on the top north of the Calhoun cut the ground in now as wide as it will be. The ground has been cut out of the hill has now been sunk about 20 feet below what it originally was. It will have to be cut out of the hill. The spirit of emulation and healthy spirit of emulation, the huge amount of dynamite used in the mountain builders, into the most unlikely looking places, where they cut

The most advanced methods, not only in construction, but in railroad management, are being introduced into the zone with corresponding economies in time and cost. This has been shown in the handling of the tonnage from ships into the zone, and in the construction of the Panama railroad, where thanks largely to the efficiency of General Manager McGowan, in time and cost, the zone is now better off. My examination tended to show that some of the departments had doubtless necessarily become overgrown, and that it was necessary to be subordinated without impairment of efficiency and with a saving of cost. The chairman of the commission, Mr. Shreve, has been endeavoring to make a constant view, and is now reorganizing the government of the zone, so as to make the form of administration the least expensive, subordinating everything to direct efficiency with a view to the work of the canal commission. From the point of view of economy, it is undoubtedly have to be made, for it must be remembered that in this giant work of construction, the departments or bureaus, which are vital for the time being, but which soon become useless, just as it will be the case with the departments of the army, and even to erect towns, which in ten years will once more give place to jungle, or will then be at the disposal of the canal.

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protected. In a place which has been
for ages a byword for unhealthfulness,
and with so large a congregation of
people, it is not surprising that the
hard work there will now and then be
outbreaks of disease. There will now
and then be shortcomings in administra-
tion, and it is not surprising that stu-
dents to delay the excavation of the cut
or the building of the dams and locks
and the improvement of the entire nat-
ural and, and on though the work
of them will mean more than a little
extra delay or trouble. Yet each, when
excused, will say that the work is con-
tained to timid folk of little faith, will
serve as an excuse for the belief that
the work is being badly managed.
Experimenters in the work of the
housing, in hygiene, in street repairing,
in dredging and in digging earth and
in the building of the dams and locks
will be a failure; and among those who
hear of it, a certain proportion of doubting
Thomas will at once believe that the
work is being badly managed. Look at
and there some minor raciality will be
uncovered; but as to this, I have to say
I have been unable to find any dis-
reputable person who had so much as heard
of any serious accusations affecting the
work of the housing commission. I am
responsible officer under it. I append a
letter dealing with the most serious
accusation, that the ownership of lots in
Colon the chairman was not a man of
a reputable man, and is utterly baseless.
It is not too much to say that the
Colon the chairman is a man of
breathes honesty as it breathes efficiency
and energy. Above all, the work has
been kept absolutely clear of politics. I
have been able to keep the work clear
of spoils politics in connection with it.

I have investigated every complaint
which has come for which there seemed
to be any ground. I have investigated
two or three cases, all of which I
have indicated in the course of this
commission in the respect complained
of. In every case, the investigation
there was foundation for the com-
plaint and that the methods of the
commission in the respect complained
of were not at all defective. In every
instance the complaints proved abso-
lutely baseless, save in two or three
instances where they referred to mis-
management. In these cases I had
ready found out and corrected.

So much for honest criticism. There remains an immense amount of aspersions to be cast upon the public official. Where the slanderers are of foreign origin I have no concern with them, even if they are Americans. I feel for them, however, because of their indignation; because, in a spirit of wanton dishonesty and malice, they are endeavoring to use their pen to hamper the execution of the greatest work of the kind ever attempted, and to bring to the aid of the efforts of their fellow-men to put to the credit of America one of the giant feats of the ages. The outrageous charges of fraud and misfeasance constitute a gross libel upon a body of public servants who, for trained intellect, for energy, for courage, for industry and devotion to duty, have never been excelled anywhere. There is not a man among these directing the work of the great government who is in any position on any other basis than merit alone, and not one who has used his office for the purpose of his own personal or pecuniary advantage.

After most careful consideration we have decided to let out most of the work by contract, if we can come to a satisfactory understanding with the contractors. The whole work is of a kind suited to the peculiar genius of our people, and our people have developed a special aptitude for the kind to grapple with it. It is of course much better to do the work in large part by contract than to do it all by government expenditure, and it is possible on the one hand to secure to the contractor a sufficient remuneration to make it worth while for the prospective contractors of the kind to undertake the work; and provided on the other hand it can be done on terms which will be of benefit to the government. After much consideration the plan already promulgated has been modified and adopted. This plan in its essential features was drafted after careful and thorough and considerate study by the chief engineer, Mr. Stevens, who, while in the employment of Mr. Hill, the president of the Great Northern, was familiar with the details of this very type of contract. Mr. Stevens then submitted the plan to the chairman of the commission, Mr. Shonts, who went carefully over it with Mr. Rogers, the legal adviser of the commission, to see that all legal requirements were met. He then furnished copies of the plan to both Secretary Taft and myself. Secretary Taft submitted it to some of the best counsel in the government, and afterwards I went over it very carefully with Mr. Taft and Mr. Shonts, and we adopted it in its general features. Mr. Rogers and Mr. Taft both are of the opinion that it places the maximum of advantage with the minimum of disadvantage upon the contractor. It is, without doubt, the most effective plan. Without doubt it will have to be changed in some respects before we can come to a satisfactory agreement with responsible contractors, perhaps even after the bids have been received; and of course it is possible that we may find it necessary to make some change the government will do the work itself. Meanwhile the work on the isthmus is progressing steadily and

A Revue-headed commission is of course a clumsy executive instrument. It is a committee of men, each with his own ideas, and each, with such heads of departments and other officers under him as would be able to carry out his ideas. It is not permitted to employ the best engineers in the country as consulting engineers.

On this paper with a map showing substantially what the canal will be like when it is finished. When the Culebra cut is finished, the canal to be built if they are built as now proposed there will then be at both the Pacific and Atlantic ends of the Isthmus of Panama two lakes, connected by a broad channel running at the bottom of a ravine, across the backbone of the Isthmus, the watershed. Those best informed here believe that the work will be completed in about eight years; but it is never known how long it will take to work as this, especially in the tropics.

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